/659 cont./

606 In spite of these prohibitions, and precisely because of the prevailing obligations, the two parties must associate in an indirect and roundabout way. For about a year after her marriage, the daughter-in-law may exchange a few necessary words with her mother-in-law; the son-in-law for the rest of his life refrains from any direct conversation with his father-in-law. We have just spoken of this. It is the daughter who intercedes for her husband with her father, or the son who does so with his parents for his wife. The corresponding brothers-in-law or sisters-in-law also serve as mediators.

In a concrete situation, social intercourse runs as follows. /660/ When the son-in-law becomes aware that his father-in-law is approaching him and his family, he sends his wife out to meet him and has her say: "My husband sends me, he invites you into our hut!" Pleased over this, her own father replies: "Thank you very much, but I was about to build my own hut!" He decides to do this in order not to embarrass his son-in-law, for the latter would have to remain silent, sit apart at meals, and humble himself constantly, which would spoil the visit for him. Hence, in order to save him any embarrassment and unpleasantness, the father-in-law builds his own hut nearby, and he is assisted by his daughter. When the building is nearly finished, she returns to her own hut and addresses her husband in a voice that all can hear: "I invited your father-in-law to stay with us, but he prefers to live in a hut of his own. He thanks you!" Then her husband speaks in a loud voice so that the father-in-law can hear it: "I am very sorry that my father-in-law is not coming to my hut!" In this delicate way he expresses the fact that he is glad to be at the disposal of his father-in-law. While the latter is in the vicinity, his own daughter visits him repeatedly; the son-in-law himself appears in the father-in-law's hut only once or twice and inquires about the possible needs of his father-in-law from his own wife.

521 203 606 As a substitute for direct conversation, which is not permitted, they manage in their own way. As soon as it is quiet outside, the son-in-law, in a loud voice and without addressing anyone, tells what he has recently experienced, observed, and learned, especially things which are worth knowing for his parents-in-law. The latter hear each word and are kept up-to-date.

/660 cont./

521 606 On the other hand, the father-in-law, squatting before his hut fire, talks as though to himself, but so that it can be heard all around, saying what he wants his son-in-law to know. He also gives actual instructions to him in this manner or in similar roundabout ways. For example, if his son-in-law enters his hut, he neither greets him, looks up, nor says a word, but silently stays in some dark corner. If they are both alone and no one can mediate between them, the old man expresses his wishes, not by direct address, but as though he were talking to himself: "I left my knife lying on the beach!" Or he says: "Outside on the tree branch there hangs a penguin that I should like to roast, I'm hungry!" Or he might say: "I killed a sea lion this morning. It is a large animal. I am an old man, and I could not drag it to the canoe; I left it lying out there on the rock." Or, finally: "The wood for my hut fire is almost used up; if only someone would provide me with fresh firewood!" The son-in-law understands such statements; they are requests of his father-in-law, which he carries out without objection.

606 /661/ Such strange reserve on the part of the son-in-law and daughter-in-law and their association with their parents-in-law in the oddly indirect way through their respective children or through a brother-in-law or sister-in-law are expressions of veneration and respect for the old people. They say: "The parents-in-law are worthy of veneration, therefore children-in-law may not conduct themselves conspicuously in their presence nor exchange a word with them (42)!" The parents-in-law are held in the same

42. "Sons-in-law and daughters-in-law treat with considerable deference their fathers and mothers-in-law" /cited in English/, according to Bridges (a):202.

esteem as own parents; the fathers-in-law and mothers-in-law of a married couple regard each other as brothers and sisters. Hence the children-in-law fulfill all the duties that they owe their own parents. They give them presents very often and do all kinds of work for them: they bring wood for the hut fire, grass for the sleeping place, drinking water and food, rushes for braiding baskets,

/908 cont./

X881 S77 is why almost all the adults can recall without a gap the exhortations that they received when they were candidates. Compare the examples given above on page 724.

X881 S77 S24 Their own desire is directed toward undisturbed self-reflection which is possible only through an enduring silence. Long conversations in the [illegible] hut are not permitted. One may say whatever is necessary, but always briefly and in a low voice. This is done in such a way that it hardly seems as though a person is requesting something of another or asking his neighbor for something. Persons who are sitting farther /909/ apart resort to [341] unobtrusive signs. The [illegible] hut is not the place to have a heart-to-heart talk or to chat. Nevertheless, since olden times it has been regarded as proper for related persons or friends to visit with each other, and during the first few days most of those present take advantage of this freedom. One person will leave his place and sit beside the person with whom he wishes to talk. He chats inconspicuously and in a very low voice, afterwards creeping back to his place. The hours just before and after the noon hour are chosen for these visits, but the conversation is usually terminated after a brief hour.

A person addressed by an outsider sometimes lets him know how annoyed he is to have been torn from meditation. He will answer briefly without relaxing his attitude of concentration. To begin with everyone is careful never to approach a person unless it is absolutely necessary. The late afternoon hours until shortly X881 before the nocturnal dances and games are a period of especially S77 serious concentration. This is also the time for the instruction of the candidates, during which the adults, without exception, are very quiet. During the forenoon when the ufwéla are sometimes practicing outside the Great Hut or are busy getting food, one or another of the old people will devote himself to some minor manual occupation, and some of the women will occasionally look after things in their dwellings. Inside, however, the same calm prevails as during the afternoon, and anyone meditatively pursuing his own thoughts will not be disturbed.

X881 S77 S16 As for the candidates, they are expected not to move at all (p. 707). Even the adults, however, maintain an almost motionless

/1014 cont./

the burdensome itch caused by lice. When they are not doing that, they habitually pick their noses with their thick fingers, and with the flat of the hand they wipe off the phlegm from their noses and smear it on the ground or on the wall of the hut. In all these things our Yamana resemble the Selk'nam (Vol. I, 465), but the latter are in general cleaner than the Yamana. Every European is considerably repulsed by their offensive behavior which is so far removed from our rules of decency.

We must also briefly describe how conversation generally takes place during ordinary visits. A person who has entered a hut as a guest crouches silently by the fire for a while. He does not look about inquisitively nor make conspicuous movements (p. 914). Finally he manages to say a few words in a low voice and leads into unimportant matters. Presently he describes his canoe trip and his experiences with the weather during the last few days. If he happens to have had an exciting hunt, he takes particular pleasure in describing it in minute detail. Meanwhile he works himself into quite a lively state. After that he goes on excitedly and from /1015/ one experience to another, to the satisfaction of those present, and he stops only after many hours. No one dares interrupt him; no one would show boredom, no matter how much he felt it. No matter how great the suspense of those present about a certain incident experienced by the guest, no one would ask specific questions if the guest himself did not get around to talking about it. They do not want to annoy him in any way or to show inquisitiveness by a direct inquiry. The guest ends his tale when he feels like it; no one may presume to ask him to stop because of the late hour. Sometimes a long report is given by a talkative old man, which the company in the circle has heard more than once, but since memories concerning unwritten laws and ancient custom are always interwoven with it, such a story does not fail to have educational value for young people and does a great deal of good.

Frequently an account first given by a man alone develops into a real discussion, but there is never a loud confusion of voices or a disorderly hubbub because the younger people hold back their remarks in favor of their elders and by no means interrupt them. If women are present and something is discussed that concerns them, too, they may of course express their opinions within limits.

/1021 cont./

571 a few go back to the clearly recognizable tendency toward gregariousness. It not only draws individual families together often, but keeps them together until urgent duties once more separate them. If two canoes meet, one can /1022/ almost always rely on their 571 steering toward the nearest landing place and building their huts 521 next to each other there. Then they sit huddled together hour after hour and talk to their heart's content. "They are extraordinarily fond of long talks and stories; a good part of the day is filled in this way" (Aspinall:270). Some hut will have a special attraction for all who are camping in the same place, without any particular reason. Even before darkness has fallen, one person after another will inconspicuously steal toward it and squat down beside the fire. Everyone feels content in such a circle of intimate friends, and the conversation fills long hours. Bridges (VSA:XII, 7; 1865) says: "They are certainly much given to talk, and when seated before a good fire, engaged in conversation, they seem most happy. When they are cheerfully inclined, they are much given to immoderate laughter, but when sulkily inclined, it is difficult to restore them to cheerfulness" /cited in English/(441).

441. Of the 12 Yamana who at that time were staying on Isla Keppel, Bridges (VSA:XII, 9; 1865) reported on September 16, 1864: "The natives are certainly of a social turn; of evenings they generally meet in one house or another, and spend their time in conversation and merriment" /cited in English/. Reports of other missionaries confirm that in the mission, also, families of all areas lived together amicably.

521 Minor happenings and the sometimes wholly insignificant details of a day are the subject for conversation; they are by no means as completely insignificant and meaningless for the Fuegians as for a European passing through. J. Rau (VSA:XI, 291;1864) referred to this in his remarks on August 1, 1864: "Often I wondered myself about their long conversations which they keep up when they are by themselves; several times I thought what they were talking about. Once I listened, and I found they were talking about a subject of which others take not the slightest notice. For

1: Guainde--935 E-5 (1918-1924) 1937 SH6 Yahgan SH6

/1922 cont./

•521 instance, one told to the others in an evening, how he had seen, during the daytime a fanirook, a black bird, passing down a sloping hill, step by step; the bird looked round about, then at once it commenced to shake its feathers and flew off, about which they burst out into a loud laugh. Another began to tell what he had seen strange, when he was out on horseback, and the third what he had seen when he drove the cattle home" /cited in English/.

521 203 Meanwhile everyone rests comfortably, and anyone who feels like eating is immediately served by the mistress of the hut. None of those present knows when there will be another opportunity for a comfortable time together. On its trips each family usually spends only one or two nights in the same place. If entertaining fellow-tribesmen offer them company on an evening, they take advantage of it until long after midnight, and yet early the following morning they are ready to travel on. The ample, unconstrained exchange offers the incalculable advantage of keeping the individual members of the tribe from far and near in close touch and of laying bare everyone's actions. In this way all their /1023/, traditions are kept alive and transmitted, and any deviation from ancient custom can be prevented if it should become noticeable in any way.

522 [[71]] Finally we must mention a custom that is practiced by the Yamana exactly as it is among the Selk'nam (Vol. I, 471), a diverting, half-serious, half-humorous talk contest between two people from different regions who have met in a hut. One of them will intentionally challenge his opponent with jokes and banter by praising the virtues of his own home and the capability of his own local group. Soon the other interrupts him with laudatory remarks about his region, his relatives and friends, the habits and qualifications of his group. The verbal exchange goes back and forth and is attentively listened to by all present. Finally when the two opponents have exhausted their repartee and their wittiness, they resort to mild insults and definite accusations. Now one tries to outdo the other in this without letting it become obvious that he feels hurt. At the dangerous moment, however, the bystanders, who unerringly recognize it, break off the talk contest between the two with very loud applause, thus preventing an unfortunate outcome of the initially

/1471 cont./

## 1. Gatherings

571 From previous accounts the Yamana is known to be a person
593 who has himself under perfect control and who usually behaves in
521 a very /1472/ reserved manner in the company of others (p. 914 ).
This attitude is not determined solely by mistrust of others and the traditional rules for social intercourse (p. 915 ): it is far more a natural characteristic of our Indians, to which their training, of course, contributes its share. Within the family circle every member is very reserved and taciturn. For hours at a time individuals will sit beside each other in the canoe or in the hut without exchanging a word. If they chat with one another now and then, their talk almost always centers around what the present day has brought. Loud gaiety and spontaneous outbursts of joy are more or less rare within the individual family. Nevertheless, many a father will amuse himself with his young sons and many an active mother will do the same with her daughters in every conceivable way. Parents really enjoy playing with their young children and fondle them very lovingly from the day they are born (p. 573 ).
593 As soon as children have some understanding, the parents confide
961 in them about their own experiences and the knowledge derived
521 from it, as well as much of their religious and mythological belief. In this way the children obtain a rich heritage of ideas and learn to think about it when they are alone. In the evening after the long day's journey, the parents, squatting around the hut fire or stretched out on their hard beds, repeat in detail just about everything that the day has brought. They make comparisons and recall other things, confirm this thing and warn about that, discuss their plans for the morrow, and toy with hopes for the future. This is the particular kind of social life, maintained within narrow (in fact, the narrowest) limits, that the Fuegian family can offer them.

571 On a land or canoe trip individual persons usually pass each
521 other without stopping: both parties are content with a brief greeting, a modest question and an equally brief answer (p. 921 ). If, however, several families of friends or relatives brought together by chance after a long separation are camping together, there is great liveliness in the group. The greeting of two friends is sometimes loud and impulsive, and on such an occasion the discussion

/1472 cont./

S71 S21 between individuals may last far into the night (370). There is

370. If, as Bridges (b):205 reports, several families had joined around the fire, "they were very animated, spending most of their time in jovial conversation and in the most exuberant demonstrations of happiness. Their laughter, natural and cordial, was excessive in the extreme" /translated from Spanish/.

an exchange of personal adventures and experiences, they report and discuss what has happened in their own families, and they cover in detail their lives and activities as these unfold day by day in a smaller or larger group. This kind of exchange keeps everyone informed about the actions of his relatives and friends.

S71 Of far greater significance are those gatherings that come about in connection with a universal obligation, such as /1473/ to instruct young people in the kina (p.795) and kina (p.1295), to express sympathy to mourners in the yamalafemina (p.1079), or to demand atonement for a crime against life, as happens in the case of revenge for bloodshed (p.598). All these gatherings are occasions for renewed acknowledgment of prevailing customs and lawful tradition, occasions when adults are reminded anew of their valuable heritage and it is passed on to young people. I am thinking here primarily of religious belief and the social and moral precepts, but also of the historical and mythological tradition (371). It has been mentioned a number of times that a gift

371. The assertions of Bridges (b):236 and Hyades (g):338, namely, "The natives neither preserve any tradition about their past history nor know where they came from" /translated from Spanish/ and "there are two or three legends of fantastic exploits, each telling of some ancient actual deed..." /translated from French/, do not need special refutation in view of what is contained in Part 4 of the present volume.